NMBZ’s Stunning New Head Office on Page 12
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Our feature article this issue is the iconic new NMBZ headquarters along Borrowdale Road designed by local architectural firm Studio Arts Inc. This striking building perfectly reflects NMBZ’s corporate image – it looks solid and dependable and at the same time modern and contemporary.

We’re covering the new Shopping Mall in Aspindale which will bring welcome convenience for residents of Aspindale Park and the surrounding areas including Budiriro, Mufakose, Highfield, Marimba, and Kambuzuma.

Driptech once again shows their commitment to supporting the various agricultural sectors of our economy with the best products, technical advice and innovative, tailor-made irrigation systems. We take a look at a blueberry farm just outside Harare where Driptech have supplied a fully automated, state of the art, irrigation scheme.

A. M. Machado Building Contractors, in conjunction with Dr Solanki, have successfully converted an older house in Milton Park to create a training centre for medical staff on the frontline of dealing with the pandemic.

On the design front we’re excited to present Elite Interior’s new showroom in Mount Pleasant. The showroom is elegant and stylish and guaranteed to get your creative juices flowing.

Prime Bricks is a relative newcomer to the construction business and have quickly become leaders in the field, supplying a wide range of pre-cast concrete products for building and civil engineering works.

Simbisa Brands Zimbabwe has recently opened a new outlet in the formerly sleepy town of Karoi for sit down dining as well as takeaways.

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For NMB Bank In Borrowdale
text: Michael Nott
photos: Scotty Photography & Structure and Design
architectural drawings: Studio Arts Inc
interior design drawings: Blackconsult
MBZ Holdings Limited has recently opened their new Head Office along Freedom Legacy Way (formerly Borrowdale Road) overlooking part of the racecourse. This comes at a time when a number of major businesses are opting to relocate from the Central Business District (CBD) of Harare to office parks, in more favourable environments for both customers and employees. Established 27 years ago, NMB Bank has consolidated its geographic presence in the country by extending its branch network. The new Head Office in Borrowdale is the jewel in their crown.

Clearly visible from Freedom Legacy Way, with exquisite signage done by Claude Neon Signs, the new building is iconic and impressive. The structure is modern, clean and simple, and enhances NMB Bank’s corporate image as solid and dependable. The exterior materials used are a combination of glass curtain walls, steel pergola, concrete and slate-like wall tiles, all of which transcend through time, resulting in a structure that will look good for many years to come. The extensive use of glass invites the outside into the building.

Lying on approximately four acres of land, the new NMBZ head office has beautifully landscaped garden designed by Plant Escape. The garden helps to create a more serene and quiet ambience, inspiring creativity and collaboration amongst staff. There is ample secure parking facilities for both staff and clients.
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A part of KANSAI PAINT
The paint that re-imagines spaces
The mesmerizing work of art was designed and completed within two years by local architectural firm Studio Arts Inc also known for grandeur projects including the Victoria Falls International Airport, the new Parliament building, Central Registry and Immigration Control Head Office Harare as well as the ZERA Head Office in Harare.
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The project main contractor, Sogecoa Zimbabwe working with the project managers, Urban Rises – a local company previously known as Joina Development Company, completed building works on schedule within budget and in record time. Urban Rises have vast experience both locally and internationally after successfully completing projects such as Joina City, Monavale housing development, Riverside Walk, Cresta Accra and Cresta Lusaka.
main profile

NMB Bank’s prestigious banking suite, the Excellence Centre, is the epicentre of the ground floor, seamlessly integrating into the Head Office’s main reception and elevator atrium with a gazing view of the full three storey high building with very high ceilings for good ventilation. Taking a cue from its name, the NMB Excellence Centre opens into a finance cosmopolitan, exclusive banking halls and banking lounges, esteemed banking manager’s office and conference rooms. This prestigious banking suite also has self-service pods aimed at encouraging customers to take control of their banking. Clients wishing to have business meetings can book in advance the conference rooms within the banking suite, complementing the NMB Bank’s offering of wealth management and advisory services to its high net worth customers.

The main reception area also has cosmic glass panels overlooking the exterior landscaping as well as interior planters which integrate the go-green theme from indoors to outdoors space. Behind the custom made main reception desk, the interior design company, Black Consult Pvt Ltd has created a full height wooden clad façade of beech veneer which has been cut into geometric shapes. This is recurring design theme where glass panels have been given a similar look with frosted vinyl shapes. The designer has also created ‘green’ feature walls which resembles freshness, at ease with nature, calmness, and relaxing environment, blending well with geometric design pattern.

NMBZ’s commitment to environmental sustainability is also shown through its massive solar plant which powers the building and was designed and installed by Tendo Electronics.

In the middle of the ground floor is a large courtyard atrium with a full height combination of rustic steel and glass roof. Most of the spaces on all three floors either have views onto the courtyard or out to the gardens. The courtyard provides a sense of peace and tranquillity and also serves two ‘green’ functions – shallow aqua-blue spring pools of water so there is little need for air conditioning and the glass roof allows natural light to flood the centre of the building. Black Consult together with Garden Genius set up a very simple Zen-like garden design with cycads and aloes. The garden is dotted with bright pumpkin-coloured chairs supplied by Only Italian. It is a great space for staff to take a break from their desks, make a phone call or have informal meetings with clients. There is also a staff canteen on the ground floor with outside space for rest and relaxation.
The first floor is a mix of open plan offices and private offices for department heads. Most of the office furniture was sourced from Only Italian and Bestuhle with outdoor and informal sitting furniture being supplied by Zimbrellas, Elite Interiors and Linden Hope. The interior designer selected Hertex fabrics for the custom made soft furnishings and complimentary Hertex wallpaper for wall treatments helping to create a co-ordinated look and feel in the break-out areas and smaller lounges.
The second floor has the Executive management offices with outdoor viewing decks or balconies, the main boardroom which can accommodate up to 25 people, a smaller meeting room and the executive dining room and bar. Furnished with exquisite black desks and matching filing cabinets, the executive offices offer a sleek and sophisticated look.
Other interesting design features include semi-private, partly soundproofed pods where employees can make phone calls without causing too much disruption. Workspaces also have inspirational and motivational boards with images and texts from well-known writers and thinkers such as “A man who dares to waste one hour of time has not discovered the value of life” – attributed to Charles Darwin. The designer describes these as “beautiful, yet heartfelt corporate communications”.

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Blackonsult has also curated and incorporated much of NMB Bank’s collection of art works and objet d’art including original paintings by David Chinyama, a renowned visual artist based in Canada and antique sculptures from the DRC. The artworks add a touch of luxury and opulence to the otherwise very modern and sleek interiors.

Marlene Mundangepfupfu of Blackonsult has been a preferred designer for NMBZ having successfully worked on the following NMBZ projects (concept to completion) since 2000 – Pasangano, Borrowdale Village, Southerton, Letombo Park, Mutare, Gweru, and many other smaller projects. Marlene has helped to create the bank’s identity and brand awareness, through designing interiors.
The Design Place

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- interior and spatial design
- design curation
- trend forecasting
- staging

Marlene Mundange Pufupfu
Interior & Spatial Designer

Congratulations to NMB Bank on the opening of their ICONIC Head Office!
In the executive lobby, Blackonsult designed an embossed bronze ‘tree of life’ mural in keeping with NMBZ’s philosophy of continual growth and expansion. The tree of life theme is repeated in the boardroom with frosted vinyl cut outs on the glass partition wall.
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Arup Zimbabwe (Private) Limited extend our congratulations to NMB on the successful commissioning of their new headquarters. As a firm offering a broad range of professional and technical services in Planning, Engineering and Environmental Services, we are proud to have been the Mechanical and Electrical design consultants for this outstanding office building.

We wish NMB every success in their new headquarters.

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Elite Interiors branches out to new Mount Pleasant showroom

text by Michael Nott
photos by Michele Fortmann and Structure and Design
Elite Interiors has recently expanded from their Msasa showroom and manufacturing section to open a brand new, very elegant showroom at 102 Bond Street in Mount Pleasant. (The Mount Pleasant showroom also incorporates display space for Pride of Africa and Kitchen Krazy so it’s a full design service.) Up a short flight of stairs from the busy Bond Street Shopping Centre car park you enter the sophisticated and stylish showroom designed to inspire and motivate and get your creative juices flowing in line with Elite’s maxim “Dream. Create. Live”.

Elite’s custom made furniture range and soft furnishings are set out in little vignettes with beautiful lighting and accessories. The range includes lounge sofas and chairs, chaises, barstools and tables as well as dining room chairs. The bedroom range includes headboards and bedroom boxes – and of course there’s their range of curtains, blinds and cushions.

All the furniture is hand made by Elite’s highly skilled team of Zimbabwean crafts people including carpenters, machinists, upholsterers and ironmongers. If you see something in the showroom that’s not exactly what you’re looking for Elite are happy to accommodate any changes to meet your specific needs, and they also work with architects and other interior designers to create site specific custom pieces. While their overall style could be called ‘contemporary chic’ Elite are quite comfortable working just about any design style.

The upholstery and soft furnishings are made using a range of top quality fabrics from international names like Hertex, Fabric Library, St Leger and Viney, and others. They also have a huge range of fabric samples to choose from so you’re guaranteed to find exactly what your heart desires for your upholstery, curtaining and cushions.

It all started back in 2006 when Nikki de Wet returned to Zimbabwe after studying Interior Design in Australia and set up Elite Interiors. Initially the company operated on a fairly small scale as Nikki began to establish her client base and the production team. In the beginning the company focused on curtaining and soft furnishings before venturing into furniture manufacturing. After establishing a client base in the residential, hospitality and banking areas Nikki and her team installed their products in 6 prominent hotels in the few years between 2011 and 2013.
interior design

Then, after about 10 years of fairly small scale production, the factory and showroom in Msasa was established, allowing Elite to expand even more and take on bigger projects as well as creating their own exclusive and distinctive range.

Their vast client range over the years includes many private residential projects as well as exclusive hotels like Monomotapa Hotel, Cresta Hospitality Group, and Rainbow Towers. They have supplied a number of lodges including Illala Lodge, York Lodge, Aberfoyle Lodge and the world-famous Victoria Falls Safari Lodge. Other clients include Barclays Bank and FBC Bank. They also supply the retail industry and interior designers, and are looking to push their brand and products into the export market, while still providing superior and affordable products back home.

Apart from manufacturing and retailing Elite also offers an exclusive Interior Design and Consultation Service for residential and commercial projects. Elite offers personalised service, attention to detail and the capacity to adapt and meet, or exceed, clients’ needs.

Nikki is passionate about creating employment and giving opportunities to Zimbabweans through training and work experience. Elite continues to give back to the community through various charitable services and programmes. So future plans for Elite would be to continue to grow the Elite brand to provide other home industry products such as flooring and textiles for the industry.
To find out more:
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Driptech Assists Palmlife To Create A World Class Blueberry Farm

text: Michael Nott
photos: Structure and Design
additional photos: Craig Torr
The Torr brothers, Stuart and Craig, together with the Henson family (DripTech) have recently set up a major blueberry producing farm in Mashonaland East at Ivanhoe Farm in the Enterprise area along the route to Mrewa. The project, under the name of Palmlife Pvt Ltd, has quickly become a major producer and exporter of the prized and highly valued fruit. Blueberries, which occur in the wild in North America and parts of northern Europe, are now being celebrated as a ‘super food’, low in calories and high in anti-oxidants, vitamins and minerals.

The project was started in July 2019 with the first planting of 10 ha being in October of the same year. The farm is about 45 hectares in total with around 30 hectares of blueberry production planted to date. It’s a very intensive and highly automated farming project which includes not just producing the fruit but also strict quality control, refrigeration, packaging and transport for both the local and international markets. Production this year is around 100 tonnes, off the first 10ha planted, with next year expected to be close to 600 tonnes, off 30ha. A further 14ha will be planted in April 2021, taking total production to 44ha of blueberries. Their packaging house has the capacity to process 1,000 tonnes, so there’s plenty of capacity for expansion.
space of the month

WORK IN PROGRESS
The farm is a major source of employment for locals with the number of workers during the peak season reaching 600+ people – providing opportunities and training for both skilled and unskilled labour.

Palmlife exports to South Africa as the harvesting season occurs a few months earlier here, as well as to northern Europe and the UK which has winter during our summer harvesting season. The local season runs from July to November. 90 percent of the local crop finds its way to the UK and the EU market and Palmlife is exploring the Asian market. The demand is high internationally – and is increasing locally - as Zimbabweans are falling more in love which was once a fairly exotic delicacy. Blueberries are now generally available across the world in retail outlets for most of the year.

Unlike traditional agricultural methods each blueberry plant grows in its own pot rather than directly in the soil. The pots are laid out on raised mounds covered with a weed matting fabric which resembles dense shade cloth. The plants grow in a special potting medium called LeGro, imported from Holland in huge bags. LeGro is made up from a carefully formulated mixture mostly made up from vermiculite, peat bog and coconut fibre. This ensures that each plant has the identical growing base – in conventional soil based planting the makeup of the soil can vary a lot within just a few metres. It also allows the producer to carefully regulate the EC (electrical conductivity) and the pH (which measures how acid or alkaline the growing medium is) and to control precisely the amount and type of nutrients each plant receives. Blueberries are susceptible to pest infestations like thrips, capsid and other bugs which can quickly spread and decimate a whole crop, so it’s vitally important to monitor and control plant health. The excess water which drips out the pots can also be analysed to ensure the plants are getting just the right amount of nutrients.

The highly sophisticated irrigation system was designed and installed by Driptech in >
> conjunction with Netafim (for whom Driptech are the local agents) who are innovators and leaders in this field. Simply put water is pumped from a dam or reservoir to holding tanks where it can be tested for pH and EC and the required nutrients can be added. The water quality is measured and controlled by the computerised Netafim/Netajet system. The fortified and enhanced water solution is then pumped to each and every plant pot in exactly the same amount and at the same time. The computerised system can be minutely adjusted to account for differing environmental factors like too much or too little natural rainfall, and a host of other aspects. This ensures that resources like water and fertiliser are optimally used with no excess wastage. It also means that the minimum amount of pest control can be used and ensures that all the chemical additives conform to strict international health and safety standards. It also means that workers are not exposed to harmful chemicals, which sometimes happens with crop spraying, and protects the environment. Conserving water is becoming increasingly vital as Zimbabwe adjusts to the effects of climate change – so while it seems very technical it’s actually a very ‘green’ and efficient farming method.

Driptech not only designed and installed the whole setup, they also provided the pumps, tanks, piping, arrow drippers and the Netafim monitoring components. They also provided training for the operation and maintenance of the complex and sophisticated system which has been tailor-made for Palmlife’s requirements.

Once the precious berries have been harvested – manually – they are then sent to the pack house for processing. The pack house is completely sanitised to ensure the berries are kept in peak condition and to prevent unnecessary mould or decay. The specially designed pack house, built largely from IsoBoard, is carefully temperature controlled to around 5 degrees centigrade to ensure the fruit stays at it freshest. The pack house and cooling and refrigeration was put together by Agristructures, Kingkold and Natural Air.

The berries are first graded and checked by quality control to ensure consistent size, weight, ripeness and colour and any inferior product is rejected. The grading section has special LED lighting to ensure the sorters can select the berries correctly. The berries are then kept in temporary storage where they are cooled to around 1 degree centigrade. They are then packed into individual branded cartons and the cartons are assembled into palettes for transportation. The international market in the EU has very stringent regulations for packaging. The final palettes are then dispatched through independent logistics companies to the local retailers, to the airport for overseas markets or to agents for sending the berries by sea freight. The quality control and packing sections alone employ around 90 skilled workers!
Since 1995 Driptech has been supplying agricultural projects, like Palmlife, with a wide range of equipment and irrigation solutions tailor made for different needs and different applications from small to large scale. Not only do they supply the relevant products they also offer great advice, technical planning and backup.
To find out more visit one of their branches located on Harare Drive in Pomona, Second Street extension in Belgravia, Glenara Avenue in Eastlea or Coventry Road in Workington. They also have a regional branch on Tembwe Street in Mutare.

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Incorporated in 2017, Kamau has fast developed an impressive projects pipeline, working with different real estate investors and professionals. The latest offering to come out of our pipeline is Aspindale Mall, located within Aspindale Park, Aspindale, Harare.

ASPINDALE MALL PROJECT (Completed July 2020)

Our Role
• Project Feasibility Study
• Valuation and Advisory on site acquisition
• Concept Development and Briefing of Design Team
• Assembling Project Team
• Bid Analysis and Letting out Main Contract
• Management of Main Contract and Project Team
• Tenant Installation and Leasing
• We are currently working with client on ‘Soft Landing Strategy’

Our Other Services

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Real Value Always
Residents of the Aspindale housing development in Harare West are excited about the new shopping centre which has recently opened on the corner of Kambuzuma and High Glen Roads. The new development will serve Aspindale as well as the surrounding areas of Budiriro, Mufakose, Highfield, Marimba, and Kambuzuma and areas in the Western suburbs which currently don’t have easy access to upmarket shopping facilities.

In terms of convenience and transport costs it’s a very welcome improvement to their current lifestyles.

Aspindale Park is a fairly new upper middle class housing development set on 56 hectares with around 1,200 residential units as well as provisions for schools, churches, a clinic and retail space – including the Aspindale Farmers’ Market.
A COMMUNITY REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

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**commercial profile**

It’s a gated community designed to accommodate families with parents working in the western industrial sites, the CBD and beyond.

The mall development is owned by Tonmont Properties, a private equity investments company. The project was funded through leveraged equity finance, with CBZ bank providing the Senior Debt. The project was almost 85% pre-let with the anchor tenant and the major line tenants signing on at the start of the project. This meant that the project was largely pre-funded and that tenants could specify their requirements – subject to thorough investigations regarding what was needed and wanted in the area.

After extensive research undertaken by property developers and project managers Kamau Partners construction started in October 2018 and beneficial occupation by the major tenants took place in July/August this year. Pick n Pay is the main anchor tenant with other tenants including a betting shop, a pharmacy and a hardware store. The project was around 85% pre-let before it started thanks to Kamau Partners’ investment strategy. Apart from being the project managers Kamau Partners (under the auspices of David Mutemachani) also covered the site acquisition, the concept outline and briefing to the design team, the financing and cost management, contract management, and letting and tenant installation. Kamau Partners are not just property developers – they’re also concerned with providing what communities need and how they work. In essence they focus on how our urban populations function now and in the future.
The project could be seen as part of a broader town planning scheme which aims to decongest the City Centre and create smaller independent neighbourhoods which are more attractive and offer friendlier lifestyle choices.

The project was some months behind schedule due to the volatile economic situation, rapidly changing foreign currency rates, political instability and, of course, the mayhem caused by the global Covid pandemic which led to a site shutdown for two months. Kamau Partners ended up leasing residential accommodation in the area for their workers to cope with transport and Covid restrictions.

Kamau Partners adopted an innovative Partnering Approach which included the main contractors (Delta Africa Contractors), the architectural team (Mukamba Architectural Practice), Archstruct Engineering, Delpo Logistics (materials acquisition), the Anchor Tenant Team and the investors. According to Mr Mutemachani, “This is an unorthodox approach which emphasises identifying project goals and cooperating towards those team goals. The adversarial tendencies that come with traditional models are eliminated.”

The Aspindale Mall is situated on a piece of land measuring approximately 7,800 sqm facing onto the main Kambuzuma Road. It’s a fairly sophisticated concrete frame structure under a Chromadek roof with around 3,250 sqm of Gross Lettable Area (GLA), the majority of the space being taken by Pick n Pay Supermarket and their liquor outlet, with the remaining, fairly flexible, space allocated to smaller line tenants. As the Mall occupies about half of the site there’s ample, secure parking space for shoppers.

The design team have created an attractive and welcoming façade with covered walkways, canopies and signage that invite shoppers to enjoy the shopping experience on offer. Despite the open frontage the walkways and canopies also serve to create an impression of an enclosed and secure retail space. The slick minimalist facades have been softened by the vertical and horizontal plaster bands on the side facing High Glen Road and the choice of a limited colour palette for the exterior painted surfaces. Further landscaping around the parking space will also help to moderate the understated exterior look.

Extensive use of glass allows for natural light to illuminate the line stores and adds to the general ‘green’ ambience.
The design also means that there's minimal need for artificial ventilation, heating and cooling, achieving cost efficiency in both construction and in user costs.

Residents of Aspindale Park and the surrounding suburbs are no doubt relieved to find that they no longer have to travel long distances to do their daily shopping and are enjoying the convenience of first-rate shopping facilities on their doorstep.
STRENGTHS AND RESOURCES

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Milton Park Covid-19 Clinic

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Dr Solanki and A. M. Machado Building Contractors
Give Back To The Community

text: Michael Nott
photos: Structure and Design
Earlier this year, when the COVID-19 pandemic seemed poised to overwhelm local medical facilities, A. M. Machado Building Contractors, in conjunction with well-known medical practitioner Dr Vivek Solanki, set up a COVID facility in Milton Park, Harare. Fortunately the scale of the pandemic has, so far, been significantly smaller than expected, and certainly far less than in other African countries. Europe, North and South America and India seem to have been particularly hard hit, with a second wave in progress threatening to swamp medical services, causing travel restrictions, massive job losses and economic turmoil. According to the latest figures Zimbabwe has confirmed over 8,000 cases and over 200 deaths – a small fraction of the cases reported in other countries. The figures are still much lower than Zimbabwean fatalities caused by HIV, tuberculosis, malaria and other preventable diseases. Hopefully Zimbabweans are not sliding into complacency and will continue to exercise caution and sensible safety measures!

A. M. Machado has consulted with Dr Solanki before, particularly on the construction of the prominent Borrowdale Trauma Centre and Medical Hub, so the company has extensive experience in creating top of the range medical facilities and all the related necessary safety requirements.

The Milton Park centre was previously a residential property. As part of their corporate responsibility programme A. M. Machado made the decision to give back to the community and support local health programmes. Dr Solanki has also given back to the community in terms of providing Cancer Support for children, the needy, rural outreach, free Covid19 training for healthcare workers (so far over 2500 healthcare workers have been trained by Dr Solanki’s team). As well as having donated two full ICU care beds and ventilators and monitors to Wilkins Hospital at the start of Covid19 pandemic earlier this year. So the Milton Park Centre seemed like a natural collaboration between A. M. Machado and Dr Solanki.

The Milton Park property is a well-built solid house of brick under tiles, probably built in the 60’s or 70’s. The location is ideal, being in a relatively quiet area with other medical facilities close by and, till now, fairly reliable commercial profile.
power and water supply, as well as easy access for local residents. It was a fairly modest old house set in quiet, comparatively spacious gardens, with easy parking and little traffic congestion.

Originally set up to offer free treatment for the public the centre has now become more of a training facility for frontline medical staff. Staff are trained in infection control and self-protection, including the complex and thorough donning and doffing protocols. Through A. M. Machado the centre has set up donning and doffing stations for demonstrations and teaching purposes in accordance with national health care guidelines. Trained staff can then be deployed around the country as needed with the assurance that they can treat patients safely.

Most medical centres are currently not admitting patients who are suspected to be infected and suspected cases are referred to Wilkins Infectious Diseases Hospital for treatment. The Milton Park Centre is not presently admitting suspected cases for treatment, but only for testing and referral, or for discharge to home isolation.

The centre is seen as a cost effective local facility for dealing with the pandemic as Zimbabwe currently lacks both the resources and the expertise to cope with a massive wave of new cases. Dr Solanki is urging other players to set up similar facilities nationwide.

The house was already suited to this purpose with five bedrooms now containing a total of 13 beds, plus an observation room. All the bedrooms have big windows overlooking the gardens, so they’re bright, sunny and cheerful. A. M. Machado renovated the facilities, painting, resealing the wood block floors, updating the bathrooms and kitchen and installing new ceilings where necessary. There’s also a small laboratory for testing samples.

In addition A. M. Machado has upgraded the existing staff quarters so if necessary, at some time in the future, healthcare workers can stay on the property creating a safe ‘bubble’ and preventing further spread of the virus.

The clinic is a great example of corporates and medical staff working together for the benefit of our community.
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Simbisa Brands Zimbabwe has recently opened a new outlet in Karoi in Mashonaland West on the route from Harare to Chirundu – a major route for locals, tourists visiting the northern regions like Kariba, and truckers on the way to Zambia and beyond. The official opening took place on the 16th December, 2019, just a few months before March 2020 Corona lockdown.

The new purpose built complex is situated along the main road near the Zuva Service.
Station so it’s very convenient and accessible for both locals and travellers. The new complex accommodates Chicken Inn, Pizza Inn, Bakers Inn and Creamy Inn — so there’s something tempting for everyone!

The first Chicken Inn in Zimbabwe was opened in 1987 and since then Simbisa has grown phenomenally to cover 9 African countries across the region with hundreds of outlets for their various brands. Apart from Chicken Inn, Pizza Inn, Bakers Inn and Creamy Inn — which are the best known and most loved — other brands include Haefelis, Ocean Basket, RocoMamas, Fish Inn, Nandos and more.

Karoi has traditionally been a rather sleepy, ‘drive through’ town with little to entice people to stop over or linger, but the new food outlet has changed all that. Although Pick n Pay, N Richards and Farm and City previously serviced residents, the new Chicken Inn (and a new OK Supermarket) have helped to change and revitalize Karoi’s character.

Simbisa employ most of the staff for their various outlets from local residents so the new complex has created much needed employment opportunities in the area. Employment is generally on a long term, sustainable basis and staff are trained in hospitality and food production. The new Karoi complex currently offers full time employment to 39 staff members, and of course, there have been other downstream jobs created. Hopefully other investors will follow.

The new Simbisa outlet will also provide healthy completion for other food providers ensuring that the quality of the food on offer is good and prices are competitive. Because of their size and diversity Simbisa can provide the same excellent quality at all their outlets — like Chicken Inn — where the menu and the pricing is the same across the country from Harare to smaller towns.

Apart from maintaining quality and pricing across their various outlets Simbisa is also careful to maintain their hard won brand identity. The design of the new complex is very similar to their other outlets and so it’s instantly recognizable. It’s a design that’s been proven to work well and has been refined over the years to maximize their welcoming atmosphere, easy service and customers’ convenience.

The complex was designed by South African architectural firm Pattichides and Partners who have worked closely with Simbisa over the years on a number of different projects including their drive through Chicken Inn at the Village Walk in Borrowdale which was featured in Structure and Design issue (??) The interior design is clean, cheerful and colourful with ample seating for customers.
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The different outlets are clearly identified by colour coded bulkheads, wall tiles and counters as well as backlit images of the food selections on offer. Big windows at the front make the seating area well lit during the day while overhead hanging circular lights and recessed spots warm up the space after dark. Local players in the project include the main contractor JM Construction, Engineers Dickie and Kunaka and Project Managers Maonde and Associates.

Most of the ingredients for their food (and some finished products like bread rolls and baked goods) are sourced through Simbisa’s Central Kitchen in Willowvale and rolls and confectionery are transported fresh every day. This ensures quality can be strictly monitored and because the Central Kitchen buys in huge quantities prices can be kept as low as possible.

Response by the public has been great so far – from both locals and travellers – with the customer count continuing to grow. The complex opened at the beginning of this year with customer numbers being initially high but then dropping with the onset of the COVID pandemic. Numbers are now picking up to pre-pandemic levels. Simbisa has invested a huge amount of capital in new outlets recently including at Village Walk in Borrowdale, a new branch in Shurugwi and new outlets planned for Chitungwiza and for Robson Manyika in Harare.
CHICKEN INN PROJECT

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With its contemporary design and ornate lines, the re-designed Geberit Smyle bathroom series creates a relaxing and positive bathroom ambience and brings harmony and lightness into family and guest bathrooms. With a clear sense of order and efficient use of space, Smyle achieves the highest level of convenience in the bathroom from any structural situation. Subtle shapes, maximum function.

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EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE CORNICE
THE ADVANTAGES

Written by: Carey-Ann Brown

Expanded polystyrene (EPS) cornice, an alternative to plaster cornice, has been around for a few years now. It’s gaining in popularity with property developers and DIY home owners alike, this due to EPS’s marvellous properties which make it easy to install and cheaper to install too!

So what are the properties of EPS, or Kaylite (its common name in Zimbabwe) that make is so desirable:

- Light weight
- Contracts and expands with walls
- Fire retardant
- Insulating
- Recyclable
- Cost effective
- Easy to Install

EPS cornice is light weight and flexible ensuring ease of transport to site and ease of handling on site. Simply cut the cornice to the required lengths using a sharp blade and install using miniscule amount of cornice glue – approx. 20-30 grams of cornice glue per 2.4m length. This quick drying glue has been formulated specifically for use with EPS cornice.

There is no need to use nails or other speciality application devices. Because very little experience is needed to install EPS cornice, you can do it yourself, ensuring that it is a cost effective alternative to conventional plaster options. EPS cornice is either moulded or cut so is available in many different patterns and sizes. It can also be tailor made, thus ensuring unique finishes for the discerning client.

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INSTALLING EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE/ KAYLITE CORNICE IS SO EASY

Once the cornice is installed it expands and contracts with the walls and ceiling, eliminating all possibility of cracking and ensuring a low maintenance and long life finish.
Kaylite King is a Zimbabwean success story having survived the economic ups and downs for nearly 70 years. The company is currently undergoing a factory upgrade to ensure all Kaylite cornice, ceilings, expansion joints and sheeting is readily available to local industry. Their Kaylite cornice is the preferred product for construction companies in the know. KW Construction, based in Harare, is one of construction companies, using Kaylite cornice to add the finishing touches to beautifully built housing developments in Harare and Vic Falls.

Look out for Kaylite King EPS products in-store or contact them directly:
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Polystyrene (EPS) is becoming the leading material for the manufacture of cornices as it is easy to install on a variety of surfaces and very cost effective. EPS is easy to paint and comes in various styles to suit different tastes. It is also highly resistant to water and mould which makes it ideal for use in bathrooms and kitchens where water damage may occur. Contact us for more details.

We also supply polystyrene sheets in various sizes and thicknesses for use on ceilings, floating slabs, void and structural filler, expansion joints and acoustic, wall and ceiling insulation.
Prime Bricks is situated at 40960 Mvuto Road, Old Tafara (behind MCH Fuels service station). Although a relatively young company (founded in June 2017) they have quickly become a leading player in the construction and civil engineering industries.

The founder and managing director, Mr Gift Patsika, has a background in financial services, but says he has been passionate about architecture and construction from an early age. His passion was re-awakened when he built his own house and led him to establish Prime Bricks as a one-stop building materials supplier.

Although their core business is the manufacturing of compressed concrete bricks they also produce and supply a number of other construction related items. Mr Patsika points out that concrete bricks continue to cure and harden over the years which makes them more desirable, and more cost effective, than clay bricks which tend to get weaker and softer as the years go by. Any building project is a major investment so it’s best to make the smart choice from the beginning.

Their bricks are packaged in 500 unit bundles, wrapped in plastic with tough plastic strapping, so they’re easier to transport and there’s no confusion about quantities. Prime Bricks has their own ‘grabber’ truck to make loading and off-loading quicker and simpler. Customers can enjoy the convenience of bricks delivered to their building site efficiently and cheaply with minimal fuss. Transport is free within a 15km radius and very reasonable for further distances as it is all part of the deal. The old days of loading each brick by hand are now long gone.

The capacity to supply bricks and building materials makes Prime Bricks especially attractive for home builders in the rapidly growing areas of Tafara, Mabvuku, Eastview and other developments in Harare East as far as Arcturus. Although they do supply to all areas across the City and around Zimbabwe.
franchise holder so their prices are very competitive and they always have cement in stock from small to large quantities. They also supply pit sand and river sand, aggregates, Rhinset and related products. Do you need brickforce or DPC - Prime Bricks can supply that for you too!

Prime Bricks is currently working on extending their timber section so soon that will become an extra dimension of their product range.

If you have an idea of what you want to build Prime Bricks can help you realise your dreams. Prime Bricks will work together with architects and engineers to get your plans finalised and come up with a comprehensive Bill of Quantities so you know before you start what everything will cost. They can even project manage your build for you and supervise sub-contractors like plumbers and electricians. It’s a great service for people in the diaspora wanting to build back home.

In the Civil Engineering sector Prime Bricks manufactures pre-cast electricity transmission poles as well as curb stones, manhole ring sets, valve boxes, shelverts and culvert pipes all in various sizes. They are currently supplying culverts for the new Harare/Mutare highway.
Prime Bricks is a construction company that focuses on the production of civil engineering products such as Culvert Pipes, Shelverts, Curbestones, and Electricity(ZESA) Transmission Poles among many. The company is also widely known for producing quality and strong Compressed Cement Bricks. It also has a wide range of other construction-related products which makes it qualify to be a One-Stop-Shop for your construction needs.

The company opened doors to its first customers in 2017 and has amassed a lot of relevant experience over the past years in the industry.

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Gift Patsika believes that the company needs to continually improve and grow to remain competitive and meet customers’ requirements.

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